

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INEZ MOORE TENENBAUM
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
Assistant Superintendents for Instruction
District Test Coordinators

FROM: Theresa G. Siskind, Director
Office of Assessment

DATE: May 31, 2005

RE: Update on Assessments

Summer is approaching with its attendant testing reports. I hope that the end of your school year has been smooth. Thanks to the District Test Coordinators, the School Test Coordinators, the test administrators, the test monitors, the examinees and everyone else involved in testing for a testing year well done!

The information in this newsletter provides the most current information from the Office of Assessment about various testing programs. **Please share this information with all appropriate staff members in your district.** Copies will be sent only to the addressees above.

General Information

Test Dates – An updated implementation timeline and the 2006-07 test dates have been loaded to the web. They are located at www.myschools.com/offices/assessment/news/Timeline111303.doc; and www.myschools.com/offices/assessment/news/TestingDates110804.pdf. Please note that an EOCEP fieldtest in US History and Constitution has been added for spring 2006. More information about the fieldtest will be provided at the fall workshops.

Testing Task Force – The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and the Department convened a task force during the fall of 2004 to make recommendations for changes to the statewide testing system in South Carolina. The Task Force report and other related documents are posted on the web at www.myschools.com/offices/assessment/Publications/IndexASMTdocs.htm.

Upcoming Meetings

Summer Meeting – The annual DTC review meeting will be held in Columbia on Monday, June 13. DTCs will be asked to provide feedback regarding the test materials and procedures for PACT, EOCEP, and HSAP. A summer pretest presentation for BSAP and EOCEP will also be provided. DTCs should have already received information about this meeting, as well as a registration form, in a separate memo dated May 17, 2005.

New DTC Meeting – An orientation session for new DTCs is scheduled for Wednesday, August 10 in Columbia. Districts will receive further details about this meeting during the summer.

Fall Meeting – The fall testing workshops will be held Tuesday through Thursday, September 20-22 in Columbia. (The same information will be presented each day.) The agenda will include fall pretest presentations for EOCEP, HSAP, and grade 2 norm-referenced tests (ITBS and CogAT), as well as presentations on PACT score reports from Spring 2005 and Precode for 2005-06. Additional information about these workshops will be sent in August.

Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests (PACT)

Contact: Susan Creighton 803-734-8535 screight@sde.state.sc.us

2005 Score Results - By the end of June, DTCs will receive an “unused test booklet” report from DRC. Districts will have a very short window of opportunity to check this report against their security checklists and notify DRC of any documents in the “unused test booklet” report that should be scored.

Districts will receive PACT Preliminary Below Basic Reports (based on multiple-choice items only) according to the following schedule:

Grades 5 and 8	June 17
Grades 4 and 6	July 1
Grades 3 and 7	July 18

Districts will receive PACT data files (with results based on all items) via CD-ROM on the following dates:

Grades 5 and 8	June 27
Grades 4 and 6	July 11
Final (All Grades)	August 1

Also on **August 1**, districts will receive electronic versions of student rosters, summary reports, and demographic reports. These reports will be provided via CD-ROM and DRC's secure Web site.

By **August 23**, districts will receive paper copies of PACT Individual Student Reports and student labels, along with any other score reports requested through DRC's online report ordering system. (DRC will be contacting DTCs regarding the timetable and instructions for ordering score reports through the online system.)

Spring 2006 - One of the recommendations of the Task Force on Testing was to reduce testing time and cost by eliminating all constructed-response (CR) items on PACT. As a result, the following changes will be made for the 2005-2006 school year:

- eliminating constructed-response items on PACT science tests,
- eliminating constructed-response items on PACT social studies tests, and
- reducing the number of constructed-response items to a maximum of 10% of the points on the PACT mathematics tests.

There will be no changes in the number of constructed-response items on the ELA tests. The test blueprints currently on the web will be updated in July to reflect these changes.

Alternate Assessment

Contact: Suzanne Swaffield 803-734-8274 sswaffie@sde.state.sc.us or Douglas Alexander 803-734-3923 dgalexan@sde.state.sc.us

Training for Teacher Leaders – There will be sessions for PACT-Alt Teacher Leader Training on July 26 and July 27. Both sessions are identical so the Teacher Leader can attend either day. Information about the training has been sent to the Alternate Assessment District Test Coordinators.

High School Assessment Program (HSAP)

Contact: Nancy Whitlock 803-734-0664 ncwhitlo@sde.state.sc.us

HSAP Score reports for spring 2005 – Districts will receive their HSAP district data files and score reports by July 15 (i.e., student reports for all students, including Graduation Express; student rosters; and summary reports). Copies of the *Spring 2005 HSAP Score Report User's Guide* will accompany the score reports.

Lighthouse - *Lighthouse for South Carolina* is an on-line tool for analyzing data from the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) and the HSAP. AIR released a pilot of this tool on May 26. During the pilot you will be able to analyze data from the 2003-04 EOCEP Algebra 1/Mathematics for the Technologies 2 tests and the spring 2004 HSAP. We also would appreciate any comments for improving the tool, as we anticipate adding 2005 data for both programs.

Testing Students with Disabilities on HSAP - The Assessment Program regulation has been amended to read as follows:

All students except students who meet the participation criteria for alternate assessment will take the HSAP in the second spring after initial enrollment in the ninth grade. Students with an IEP may take the HSAP with accommodations and/or modifications determined to be appropriate by the IEP team and allowable by state and federal statutes and regulations. Students who meet the participation criteria for alternate assessment will take the High School Assessment Program–Alternate Assessment (HSAP-Alt) in accordance with guidelines on file with the State Department of Education.

For students with disabilities who meet all of the following conditions, the IEP team will determine on an annual basis participation in the HSAP.

- a. The student failed to pass any part of HSAP during the initial administration, and
- b. the student has not earned any Carnegie units in the core curriculum, and
- c. the student is not enrolled in a course in the core curriculum required for high school graduation.

All students who do not meet these three conditions will take the examination as required by R 43-262.

Since the Legislature passed a proviso that addresses the same amendments, this policy will go into effect with the fall 2005 administration.

Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP) Exit Examination

Contact: Lane Peeler 803-734-8282 lpeeler@sde.state.sc.us

Spring 2005 - BSAP score reports will arrive in districts according to the schedule below.

BSAP preliminary score reports June 3

BSAP final score reports July 1

Summer 2005 - This will be the final administration of BSAP and is only available to a very specific population. Section 59-30-10, Code of Laws of South Carolina, states the following:

“For a student who has failed to pass the exit examination **after four chances** and who **certifies** that his military, educational, or other career goals must be placed on hold as a result of his failure to pass the exit examination, a summer testing of the exit examination following a **remediation program in summer school after the student’s twelfth grade year** may be offered to allow these students to move forward with their career in a timely manner.”

This means that students must have completed all coursework and be eligible to graduate in spring 2005 except for passing one or more parts of the exit examination to be eligible to

participate in the summer administration. Score reports for the BSAP summer administration will arrive in districts by August 12.

End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP)

Contact: Lane Peeler 803-734-8282 lpeeler@sde.state.sc.us

EOCEP Online Testing - Since the initial administration of online testing with adult education students in 2004, several districts have begun to use online testing in middle and high schools. Pearson is providing training to facilitate those interested in moving to online testing. Whether testing occurs by paper/pencil or online, EOCEP class rosters are available 36 hours after Pearson receives the answer documents or the online responses. The rosters are posted to Pearson's eMeasurement Web site. Each DTC has been provided with a login ID and password to access the site.

Several districts have been involved in a comparability study. The purpose of the study is to determine if students perform in a similar manner when taking the online and the paper/pencil versions of the EOCEP tests.

Important 2005 EOCEP Dates

Spring state testing window May 2–June 9
Paper reports and CD from spring due in districts July 7

Summer state testing window June 20–August 5
Paper reports and CD from summer due in districts September 2


School year 2004-05 paper reports and CD
(which include results from fall 2004 and spring
and summer 2005) are due in districts September 22

2004-05 Results - The state will release the 2004-05 results for Algebra/Mathematics for the Technologies, English 1, Biology 1, and Physical Science in the fall.

South Carolina Readiness Assessment - SCRA and SCRAPI (Profile Interactive)

Contact: Jim Casteel 803-734-8293 jcasteel@sde.state.sc.us

Most (more than 90,000) SCRA ratings for 2004-2005 have now been completed. There have been a few (but only a few) problems with going online statewide.

Student, school, and district reports for SCRA should be received in July. There will also be CDs with district-wide data and CDs with PDF files of the student report 

In an effort to further reinforce the SCRA's appropriate and reliable use throughout the state, two new measures are planned for 2005-2006. The first of these is a required, minimum data collection plan to be drafted by the SCRA's advisory committee this summer.

The second is a verification system that will require elementary school principals to attest to the SCRA's appropriate and reliable use among the teachers they supervise. You should have received a draft verification form for your *optional* use during May 2005. Verification will become a required component of the SCRA during 2005-2006.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Contact: Christina Schneider 803-734-8534 cschneid@sde.state.sc.us

2005 Results - The specific release dates for the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress have not yet been set. Reading and mathematics results will be released sometime in the fall, and science results will be released in the spring. For reading, mathematics, and science, state level results will be provided for grade four and grade eight.

Office of Assessment Web Site

Information about the testing programs (including this memorandum) is located on the Office of Assessment web site at <http://www.myschools.com/offices/assessment/>. Information is updated continually.